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DE RUEHEK #0894/01 2191140
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2561
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3214
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1506
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3559
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2945
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000894

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN

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TAGS: PINT PGOV KG

SUBJECT: KYRGYZSTAN: ABUSE OF ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES IN PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN, PART II

REF: REF: BISHKEK 888

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Classified By: Classified By: Amb. Tatiana C. Gfoeller, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In the run-up to the 2009 Presidential elections, the government of Kyrgyzstan used all its administrative resources to support President Bakiyev's campaign. The government exerted extraordinary pressure on state employees and their families to vote for the President, going so far as to monitor the casting of their votes at polling stations. Influence was also applied to a wide range of ordinary citizens, from businessmen, to musicians and athletes, to teachers and students. In the end, Bakiyev's use of state resources gave him an advantage in the election that the opposition was unable to overcome. This is Part II of a two cable series on the run-up to the 2009 Presidential Election. END SUMMARY

VOTE FOR THE PRESIDENT, OR ELSE!

¶2. (C) Groups tied to the government reported being pressured to vote for Bakiyev. Director of the State Agency on Sports and Youth Aleksandr Voinov was told by the White House his job depended on ensuring that the majority of professional and amateur athletes vote for the president, and to use the many sport associations that receive government funding to do so. Some universities, including Osh State, the largest in the country, extended the academic year until August to ensure that students and faculty members could be forced to vote in front of the school officials that run precincts at the universities. School teachers also reported being required to vote for Bakiyev. School directors were observed at polling stations on election day, checking off lists of teachers to ensure that everyone voted.

¶3. (C) Many doctors and others connected to the Ministry of Health told Embassy employees that they have been both bribed with salary raises and free trips to Lake Issyk Kul, and

threatened with sackings if they did not vote. Some doctors have been required to give the names of five relatives who promise to vote for Bakiyev--and have been told that these names will be checked on election day.

¶4. (C) Government employees were required to postpone vacations to ensure they could vote. Several officials refused International Visitor and other USG programs because they would have been out of the country on election day. One official was able to travel on the International Visitor program only because he voted early. He claimed that he needed to take the voting receipt with him to the airport to show Customs officials, who would not let him leave without it.

¶5. (C) Despite criticism from international observers, many in the government seem satisfied with the elections. Central Election Commission members were seen partying in Bishkek the day after the elections and told EmbOff they were very proud of their work. A group of ministers were also seen toasting their success at Lake Issyk Kul the weekend after the elections. Voinov said that Bakiyev met with each Minister individually after the election to review his or her performance. Bakiyev told Voinov that he had done a good job in the campaign, especially in the far regions, and should be able to keep his job.

COMMENT

¶6. (C) The Kyrgyz government used all possible methods and tools to ensure a high voter turnout on election day, and to ensure the re-election of President Bakiyev. The

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government's massive use of state resources in favor of Bakiyev greatly dwarfed resources available to the opposition and gave the President an advantage. The efforts of the government may reflect official anxiety over public dissatisfaction with electricity shortages and other problems in the past year, or might be part of a broader attempt to tighten control in the country. Attempts by the opposition to capitalize on any dissatisfaction among voters over the election results appeared to have failed.

GFOELLER